THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE SIKHS BY CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS.

By W. Irvine, B.C.S. [*retired*].

Mr. W. Irvine, late Collector of Ghazipur, N.W. Provinces, has long been known in India as a careful investigator of historical facts. He is now engaged in the task of compiling a complete "History of the later Moghul Empire" (1707 to 1803). In that *magnum opus*, the rise and fall of the Sikhs as a political power under their 10th and last Guru, the warlike Govind Singh, and its heterodox re-assertion under the false Guru Bandah, form an important, if obscure, episode, on which Mr. Irvine's labours throw much light. He has kindly placed that portion at our disposal, but we feel that we should be doing injustice to his great undertaking, so important alike to the Government and the historian, by quoting more of the voluminous manuscript than will suffice to give an indication of the absorbing interest of the work to our readers and of the painstaking research and impartial judgment of its Author. We specially call the attention of our Sikh friends to these records of the early vicissitudes of a power, which is now a bulwark of the British Empire. The subjoined extract from "the Sikh Campaigns" describes the end of Bandah and of his followers, whose heroism, under the most tragic circumstances that can accompany death, atones for the errors that challenged their fate. Before however doing so, we would quote a few words from Mr. Irvine's introduction to the Section on "Guru Govind Singh and the First Sikh Revolt" in explanation of the scope and manner of the work in progress, of which a part is already written :

Introduction.

"The Sikh religion, although quite of modern origin, having first arisen in the end of the fifteenth century, is as fully equipped with myths and miracles as if it had been revealed thousands of years ago. With its

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development as a system of belief, however, I do not propose to deal. But turning to its external history as a political force, we find ourselves still confronted with as many difficulties, although of a different sort, as we found on its spiritual side. The order of events, their dates, the places referred to as the scene of their occurrence, on every point we find conflict and contradiction.

"Many English writers have dealt with the rise and progress of the Sikhs, and their passage from the position of obscure sectaries to that of kings and rulers among men. Major James Browne (1788), Colonel Malcolm (1812), the author of an anonymous "History of the Punjab" (1846), Dr. McGregor (1846) and last and best, Captain J. D. Cuningham, are some of the earlier writers to whom Englishmen owe nearly all that they know about the Sikhs. When we come, however, to a critical consideration of these narratives, comparing closely the one with the other, we discover them to be in a great many instances absolutely irreconcilable. All of these accounts, with the possible exception of the "History of the Punjab" (1846), approach the subject from the side of the Sikhs and their traditions. Now, as we all know, the Hindu mind is essentially unhistorical and vague in its view of the past; and the Sikh books show to a great extent this congenital defect. Their statements are a combination of great precision in a few dates with the widest, vaguest allusions in every other case. I believe that a residuum of historical truth could be extracted from these accounts, but to sift them thoroughly would require much time and abundant local knowledge. This task I have not attempted for the present. Two living writers, Bhái Gyán Singh (Gyání) and his interpreter into Urdú, Bábú Ráj Indar Singh of Siálkot, in their *Shamsher-i-Khálsah*, have recently made such an attempt. But, so far as I have yet dipped into the work, it seems wanting in strictness of criticism, and in some instances can be easily proved to be self-contradictory.

"My contribution to the early history of the Sikh power is founded almost entirely upon Mahomedan writers, some of whom have never, so far as I know, been quoted or used before. They were all contemporary with the events which they record; of some events they were actual spectators. The most important of these authorities are Muhammad Kásim, Láhorí (*Ibrat námah*), Mirza Muhammad, son of Muta'mid Khán (*Tazkirah*, finished in 1131 H., 1719 A.D.), Kámwar Khán (*Tazkirah-i-Salátín-i-Chaghtaiyah*), Mhd. Shafí', Wárid, (*Mirát-i-Wáridát*, finished in 1147 H., 1734 A.D.) and Mhd. Háshim, Kháfí Khán (*Muntakhab-ul-Lubáb*). There are others, but I need not name them all. Of the above-named, Mirzá Muhammad was at Sádhaurah when the Emperor Bahádur Sháh went there against Bandah, and he saw Bandah brought a prisoner into Dihli five years afterwards; Kámwar Khán was also with the army at Sádhaurah; Muhammad Kásim was in the besieging army at Gurdáspur, when Bandah was made prisoner. In order to render the sequence of events quite clear, I begin my extracts with the birth and early life of Gobind Singh, that is, a little before I take up the story from the Mahomedan historians, and for this portion I have used freely the *Sákhí-námahs*, translated by my friend Sirdar Sir Attar Singh K.C.I.E., Chief of

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Bhadaur, and published by him under the titles of "Sakhee Book" (Benares, 1873) and "The travels of Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh" (Lahore, 1876). There is much critical work required before these books could be considered entirely satisfactory, and there is much material in Gurmukhi, of a similar character, still waiting for someone to closely study and work it up.

CAPTURE AND EXECUTION OF BANDAH (JULY 1713—JUNE 1716).

On the 26th Zú,l Hajj 1127 (22d Decr. 1715), at the very time when the emperor was celebrating the anniversary of his victory over Jahándár Sháh, Muhammad Amín Khán presented a report from his brother-in-law, 'Abd-us-Samad Khán, governor of Láhor, with the joyful news that Bandah, the false Gurú and leader of the Sikhs, had been made a prisoner. We will now resume the story of the Sikhs from the point at which we quitted it, namely, the recall of Muhammad Amín Khán when Jahándár Sháh started from Dihli in December 1712.

From that time, Zain-ud-dín Ahmad Khan, the new Faujdar of Sirhind,* who had gained a great reputation in 'Álamgír's reign, was left to continue to the best of his ability the campaign against the Sikhs. Close to the town of Sádhaurah, Bandah had succeeded in raising a fort of considerable size, with high and thick walls. Here he maintained his position in spite of all the faujdar's efforts. As soon as Farrukhsíyar had taken possession of Dihlí, affairs in Sirhind demanded his attention; and on the 27th Muharram 1125 (22d Feb. 1713) 'Abd-us-Samad Khán was appointed governor of Láhor, with his son, Zakaríyá Khán, as faujdár of Jammú. His orders were to expel Bandah from Sádhaurah, or, if possible, to destroy him altogether. Other Mughal commanders were sent to reinforce the new governor and aid him in his task.†

Thus far the garrison of Sádhaurah had made a very stout defence. They had so contrived that they could be ready to continue their fire, even while they were cooking or eating, and the men on duty were protected from both the heat and the rain. The cannon balls, even when they hit the fort, made no impression on the walls. When Zain-ud-din Ahmad Khán had brought his trenches within forty or fifty yards of the fort walls, he formed a battery, placed a large gun in position, and commenced to fire. Although the fire was ineffectual, the garrison, out of mere bravado and to show their valour, resolved to remove this cannon in such a way that no one should hear a sound or know how they had done it. Opposite the position of the cannon, they dug a long passage, leaving only a foot or two of earth at the outer end. The oxen and ropes used in dragging their carts were held in readiness. It was the rainy season. One night it had been raining heavily from an early hour in the evening, and of the besiegers not one cared to put his head outside of his tent. Owing to the sound of the pouring rain, it was impossible to hear anything else, and it was so dark that nothing could be seen. At midnight

* Zain-ud-dín Ahmad Khán's appointment was made on the 22nd Jamádi I. 1122, (18th July 1710), vice Wazír Khan killed—Kámwar Khán, 71.

† Anon. Fragment, fo. 18*b*, Mhd. Ahsan, Ijád, fo. 130*b*, Kámwar Khán, 133.

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the Sikhs broke through the remaining wall of earth, and ranged yokes of oxen, one before the other, in the underground passage. Then some of them crossed the fort ditch, in which the water was rushing down with great force, and reached the besiegers' earthen battery where they tied their ropes firmly to the gun-carriage. The oxen pulled and the gun with its carriage, once set in motion, began to roll down. On reaching the bottom, gun and carriage fell apart. The loud noise thereby caused roused the sentinels. They saw that the cannon had disappeared. Hearing the disturbance, Zain-ud-dín Ahmad arrived on the spot, on foot and without any torch, through all the mud and mire, the water in places up to his waist, and a deluge of rain falling from above. If he ordered lanterns or torches to be lighted, he would become a target for the enemy's fire; without light, he could find out nothing. With much difficulty it was ascertained that the gun and its carriage were lying upside down in the ditch, at the foot of the earthwork. The ropes that had been attached to them had broken off. After a little time, Zain-ud-dín Ahmad Khán, collecting his senses, offered rewards of fifty rupees each to one hundred camp-followers, if they would recover the cannon. Before morning broke, they had dragged it away to a position, where it was safe from the enemy.*

When 'Abd-us-Samad Khán arrived at Sádhaurah, the siege was little if at all advanced. The Gurú himself was in Lohgarh; his followers held the fort at Sádhaurah. It was thought advisable to force them first to evacuate Sádhaurah and then crush their united forces at Lohgarh. Sádhaurah was therefore invested. 'Abd-us-Samad Khán encamped on one side, Zain-ud-dín Ahmad Khán on another, the third and fourth sides were guarded, one by the Mughals, the other by the local militia. Every other day, sometimes every day, Bandah sent out from Lohgarh three or four divisions, who fell unexpectedly, at different times, on the imperial camps. As soon as these troops were seen dimly in the distance, or the dust they raised began to appear, the besieged came out on all four sides and fell vigorously upon the besiegers. These sorties met with no success, and supplies soon began to run short. The Sikhs had thought that no one could prevent their bringing in whatever they wanted, and they had not prepared any large stores of food. What they had collected was soon exhausted. In spite of all their exertions, they were unable to bring in anything through the lines of the investing army. They now decided on flight, and finding a way out at night on the side guarded by the Zamindári militia, they took their way to Lohgarh.†

'Abd-us-Samad Khán and Zain-ud-dín Ahmad Khán followed them at once to Lohgarh. Before a shot had been fired, or a sword drawn, a panic seems to have seized on Bandah and his men; they evacuated their fort and fled into the hills. While a camping ground was being selected by the imperialists, water sought for, and preparations in progress for beginning to dig a ditch and throw up earthworks, a party of horsemen, in the most reckless fashion, rode off towards some high ground, from which

* Anon. Fragment, fo. 19*a*.

† Anon. Fragment, fo. 19*b*.

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they expected to obtain a better view of the Sikh position. As soon as they appeared on the high ground, the Sikhs streamed down the further side of the hill and disappeared. This panic and flight became the more inexplicable when the imperialists saw the elaborate preparations for resistance. From the first ridge up to the wall of Lohgarh itself, they had built fifty-two defensive posts, arranged in such a manner that each protected the other, thus exposing an assailant to a deadly fire throughout his advance. Many guesses were made as to this sudden collapse of the defence. Some insisted that food supplies must have failed; others argued that their ammunition must have given out. But the prisoners, when questioned, swore in the most solemn way that it was due to a sudden panic on seeing the horsemen appear at the top of the hill and, as they thought, about to charge them. If the advantage had been followed up at once, it is probable that Bandah would have been defeated effectually, but pursuit was delayed for several days, and by that time, in spite of much searching through the hill country, not a trace of the Gurú could be found. The capture of Sádhaurah and the flight of Bandah were reported at Dihlí on the 20th Ramzán 1125 (9th Oct. 1713).*

On the 26th Zúlka'dh 1125 (13th Dec. 1713) Zakaríyá Khán, son of 'Abd-us-Samad Khán, brought to court a report from his father, accompanied by a number of heads. A few months afterwards, 'Abd-us-Samad Khán came in person. Mír Jumlah was sent out to escort him into the capital and he was presented on the 20th Safar 1126 (6th March 1714), receiving the usual gifts. Four days afterwards he was posted to the army then proceeding to Rájpútánah under Husain 'Alí Khán. On his return from this service, he was ordered back with his son to the Panjáb, where the Sikhs had again raised their heads near Rúpar on the Sutlaj. The two nobles were sent off on the 14th Jamádi II., 1126 (26th June 1714). Not many months after 'Abd-us-Samad Khán's departure, a report was received, on the 16th Sha'bán 1126 (26th Aug. 1714) that a body of Sikhs, estimated at 7000 in number, had attacked the town of Rúpar. Khwájah Mukáram, deputy of Zain-ud-dín Ahmad Khán, the faujdár, made a good defence, although his force was small. He killed about two hundred of the enemy and cut off their heads. The rest of the Sikhs then retreated.†

About this time Khidmat Talab Khán replaced Zain-ud-dín Ahmad Khán in Sirhind. He employed a large force to watch the issues from the hills. As the Sikhs had lost their strong places, with their stores of food, and the country itself had been devastated, it was impossible for them to subsist and they retired again into the hills. After a few months they re appeared in the plains from the direction of Jammú. The parganahs of Kalánaur and Batálah were plundered, in spite of the efforts of the faujdárs, Sihráb Khán and Shekh Muhammad Dáim, and of Santokh Ráe, Kanúngo. Mhd. Dáim left his parganah and retired to his home in Kasbah Bhairúwál, south-east of Amritsar. Rich and poor again forsook their homes, many

* Anon. Fragment, fo. 19, Kámwar Khán, 140.

† Kámwar Khán, 142, 145, 147, 149, Anon. Fragment fo. 21*b*.

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went to Láhor, and many took refuge in the country of Jína and Dasohah.* At this time 'Abd-us-Samad Khán had marched southwards from Láhor to repress an outbreak of the Bhattí zamindars in the wild region known as the Lakhí jungle. He wished to carry out his repressive measures thoroughly, and therefore made no haste to return and deal with the Sikhs. In his absence Mír Ahmad Khan, faujdar of Gujarát, Irádatmand Khán, faujdar of Amánábád, Núr Muhammad Khán, ruler of Aurangábád and Parsarúr, Shekh Mhd. Dáim and Sihráb Khán above mentioned, Sayyad Hifz 'Ali Khán of parganah Haibatpur Patti, Rajah Bhím Singh, Kamboh, and Hardam son of Rajah Dharb Deo, Jharothah,† assembled their forces, and marched against the Sikhs. 'Árif Beg Khán, the Názim's deputy, came out of Láhor and camped near Sháhganj, for the protection of the city. The Gurú's first position was at Kot Mirzá Ján, where he threw up earthworks. Before he had completed his defences, the advance of the Mahomedans forced him to evacuate that place, and he then retired with 10,000 men on Gurdáspur, a small town founded by Bhái Díp Chand, a fakir.‡

The reports of the Sikh ravages sent in to the Court caused great alarm, and on the 15th Rabí' I 1127 (20th March 1715) a sharp reproof was administered to 'Abd-us-Samad Khán, and at the same time, Kamr-ud-din Khán, son of Mhd. Amín Khán, Afrasyáb Khán, the third Bakhshí, Muzaffar Khan, Rajah Udait Singh, Bundelah, Rajah Gopál Sing, Bhadauriyah, and other nobles were sent to reinforce him.§

On the 13th Rabí' II 1127 (17th April 1715) reports were received at Dihlí that, after plundering the town of Batálah, the Gurú had taken up his position in an earthen fort at Gurdáspur. This small town lies forty-four miles north-east of Amritsar, in the Bárí Dúáb. The Sikh leader made every effort to strengthen his defences and increase his store of supplies. He cut the canal known as the *Sháh-nahr* and other small streams below the hills, and allowed the water to spread, so that owing to the quagmire thus formed, neither man nor horse could reach close to the fort. When the Mahomedans arrived, many of the Sikhs were out in the villages collecting supplies. Numbers of them were seized, brought in, and executed; the rest cut off their long locks, shaved their beards, and hid themselves in Láhor. The rest of the besieged showed great activity in the defence, but 'Abd-us-Samad Khán and his son, at the head of their own men and those of the faujdars, daily met and defeated the sorties of the garrison. Two or three times a day, forty or fifty of the Sikhs would come out to gather grass for their cattle, and when attacked they faced the Mughals with bow, gun, and sword. The common soldiers were so afraid

* Mhd. Kásim, 175, 176. Bhairuwál is 31 m. S.E. of Amritsar (Thornton, 103). For Jína *see* *'Ain*, translation, II. 320, and for Dasohah, idem, II. 110, 316.

† Gujarát, 70 m. N.W. of Lahor (Thornton, 358) Amánábád, 33 m. N.W. of Lahor (Thornton 302) Parsarúr, about 60 m. N. of Láhor—Jharothah (or Jarautia), a tribe of Rajputs in the Kangra District (Ibbetson, *Census*, para. 459).

‡ Mhd. Kásim, fo. 178. Mhd. Kásim was present in these operations, and at the siege of Gurdáspur, being then in the service of 'Árif Beg Khán.

§ Kámwar Khán, 154, Anon. Fragment, fo. 22*b*. Kamr-ud-din Khán had just returned from an expedition against Madár Sáh, zamindár of Ajáon, (*sirkár* Budáon, *Súbah* Dihli?)

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of the Gurú's sorceries that they prayed he might soon take to flight as before. The further progress of the investment was reported to Court in a letter received on the 26th Rabí' II 1127 (30th April 1715).*

'Abd-us-Samad Khán soon perceived that 30,000 men would be required to prevent the escape of the besieged and the carrying in of supplies. The reinforcements brought by Kamr-ud-dín Khán were therefore very welcome. When the line of investment had been carried to within cannon-shot of the fort, the work of closing it in on all sides was divided between the several commanders. 'Abd-us-Samad Khán took one side, Kamr-ud-dín Khán and Zakaríyá Khán received charge each of one side, and the fourth side was made over to the faujdárs and zamindárs. United efforts being necessary, the tents were pitched close together all round the fort and rope was joined to rope.†

Night and day missiles from the fort fell in the camp. To protect man and beast, the soldiers threw up an earthen bank, ten to twenty yards long, before each tent, and sheltered themselves behind it in the trench thus made. By slow degrees, so that the process might not be noticed, they closed all the openings between each shelter, and before the Sikhs were aware of it, they were surrounded as if by a wall. The Sikhs, relying on their successful evasions on former occasions, tried their best to sweep the obstacle away, but the Mahomedans triumphantly resisted all their attempts to break through and make their escape. So bold and indomitable were the Gurú's followers, that they impressed their adversaries with the greatest respect for their fighting qualities. It was feared that the garrison might by a sortie *en masse*, and by sacrificing themselves, secure the escape of their leader. The superstitious soldiery were fully persuaded that the Gurú by his incantations could turn himself into the shape of a dog or cat. Thus every dog or cat they saw from their entrenchments was at once a target for stones or arrows. The struggle continued for two months and many lives were lost on both sides.‡

By this time the investment had advanced a musket-shot nearer to the walls and it was resolved to surround the fort with a field-work. A thousand axemen and a thousand carpenters were employed in cutting trees, two thousand carts and two thousand camels carried wood and earth to the spot. When the circle round the fort had been completed, mounds of earth were raised on the trunks of the trees, from distance to distance, and at the foot of the stockade, a deep and wide ditch was made. In spite of this the Sikhs continued their defence without any relaxation of effort. Nor were the besiegers idle. They drove subterannean passages towards each corner of the fort. Before 'Abd-us-Samad Khán's approach had reached the main gate, Kamr-ud-din Khán succeeded in capturing the ditch and a bastion, from which the artillery and musketry fire of the garrison had done great execution. Zakaríyá Khán obtained possession of a second gate, the one chiefly used by the garrison. Other

* Kámwar Khan, 155, Mhd. Kásim, 178, 180, Kháfí Khán II, 764. For Gurdáspur, *see* Gazetteer of India, V, 214.

† Anon. Fragment, 22*b*.

‡ Anon. Fragment, 23*a*, Kháfí Khán, II, 764. Yahyá Khán, *Tazkirah-ul-Mulúk*, fo. 12*a*.

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commanders also advanced their works, and on all sides the Sikhs were much hampered. Their provisions had now come to an end, not a grain being left in their store-houses.*

Men would make overtures to the Mahomedan soldiers and buy from them a little grain at the price of two or three shillings a pound; also as the Sikhs were not strict observers of caste, they slaughtered oxen and other animals, and not having any firewood, ate the flesh raw. Many died of dysentery and privation. Many began to pick up and eat whatever they found on the roads. When all the grass was gone, they gathered the leaves from the trees. When these were consumed, they stripped the bark and broke off the small shoots, dried them, ground them down, and used them instead of flour, thus keeping body and soul together. They also collected the bones of animals and used them in the same way. Some assert that they saw a few of the Sikhs cut flesh from their own thighs, roast it, and eat it.†

When things had come to this pass, all food being exhausted, and the smell of the putrid bodies of men and animals making the place untenable, the Sikh leaders made overtures for surrender on certain conditions. 'Abd-us-Samad Khán refused to make any concessions, and at length the Gurú submitted unconditionally; the Mahomedans entered the fort and made prisoners of everybody found alive within it. Of these prisoners two or three hundred were executed by the general's order, their heads being then filled with straw and fixed on spears. As it was known that many of the Sikhs had swallowed whatever gold coins they had, to save them from plunder, the dead bodies were ripped open, and thus much wealth fell into the hands of the low camp followers and the Mughal soldiers. The rest of the prisoners were placed in fetters and kept to grace the triumphal entry into Dihlí. The surrender of Gurdáspur took place on the 21st Zú, l Hajj 1127 (17th Dec. 1715). The list of arms taken and money seized does not give a very exalted notion of either the military strength or of the wealth of the Sikh leader.‡ In spite of this, he and his men had resisted all the force that the Empire could bring against them for the space of eight months.§

'Abd-us-Samad Khán asked for permission to come to Dihlí in person with his prisoner, but he was told to remain and attend to the government of his province, sending in the Gurú and the other prisoners in charge of his son, Zakaríyá Khán, and of Kamr-ud-din Khán, the son of Mhd. Amín Khán. On the 15th Rabí' I 1128 the arrival of the party at 'Ágharábád, just north of the city, was reported at Court. Mhd. Amín Khán was sent out at once to make all arrangements for bringing the Gurú and his followers in procession from 'Ágharábád to the palace. The

* Anon. Fragment, 23*a*.

† Kháfí Khán II 763, 764, Mhd. Kásim, 181.

‡ The arms delivered into the armoury at Dihlí were 1000 swords, 278 shields, 173 bows and quivers, 180 matchlocks, 114 daggers, 217 long knives. The valuables were a few gold ornaments, 23 gold coins, and a little over 600 rupees—Kámwar Khán, 163 (entry of 15th Rabí' 1128).

§ Kámwar Khán, 162.

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ceremonial to be followed was that observed after the capture of Sambhá Ji, son of Shivá Ji, the Mahratta.*

The triumphal entry with the prisoners took place on the 17th Rabí' I 1128 (10th March 1716). The road from 'Ágharábád to the Láhorí gate of the palace, a distance of several miles, was lined on both sides with troops. Bandah sat in an iron cage placed on the back of an elephant. He wore a long, heavy-skirted court dress (*jámah*) of gold brocade, the pattern on it being of pomegranate flowers, and a gold-embroidered turban of fine red cotton cloth. Behind him stood, clad in chain mail, with drawn sword in hand, one of the principal Mughal officers. In front of the elephant were carried, raised on bamboo poles, the heads of the Sikh prisoners who had been executed, the long hair streaming over them like a veil. Along with these, the body of a cat was exposed at the end of a pole, meaning that, even down to four-footed animals, everything in Gurdáspur had been destroyed. Behind the Gurú's elephant followed the rest of the prisoners, seven hundred and forty in number. They were seated, two and two, on camels without saddles. One hand of each man was attached to his neck by two pieces of wood, which were held together by iron pins. On their heads were high caps of a ridiculous shape made of sheep's skin and adorned with glass beads. A few of the principal men, who rode nearest to the elephant, had been clothed in sheep's skins with the woolly side outwards, so that the common people compared them to bears. When the prisoners had passed, they were followed by the Nawáb Mhd. Amín Khán, Chín, accompanied by his son, Kamr-ud-dín Khán and his son-in-law, Zakaríyá Khán. In this order the procession passed on through the streets to the palace.†

The streets were so crowded with spectators that to pass was difficult. Such a crowd had been rarely seen. The Mahomedans could hardly contain themselves for joy. But the Sikhs, in spite of the condition to which they had been reduced, maintained their dignity and no sign of dejection or humility could be detected on their countenances. Many of them, as they passed along on their camels, seemed happy and cheerful. If any spectator called out to them that their evil deeds and oppressions had brought them where they then were, they retorted, without a moment's hesitation, in the most reckless manner. They were content, they said, that Fate had willed their capture and destruction. If any man in the crowd threatened that he would kill them then and there, they shouted, "Kill us, kill us, why should we fear death? It was only through hunger and thirst that we fell into your hands. If that had not been the case, you know already what deeds of bravery we are capable of."

By the Emperor's order the Gurú, Bandah, with Táj Singh and another leader, was made over to Ibráhím-ud-dín Khán, commander of the

* Idem.

† Mirzá Muhammad, 256, Anon. Fragment, 24*a*, Kámwar Khán 162, J. T. Wheeler, *Early Records*, 180, (letter of 10th March 1716 O.S.—20th March N.S.) and Orme Collections (India Office) vol. VII., p. 1708. Mirzá Mhd. joined the procession at the Salt Market (*Mandavi-i-Namak*) and marched with it to the palace. The embassy from the E. I. Company, at the head of which was Mr. John Surman, was in Dihlí at the time.

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artillery, and they were placed in prison at the Tirpoliyah or Triple Gate. The Gurú's wife, his three-year-old infant, and the child's wet-nurse, were taken by Darbár Khán, the Názir, and placed in the harem. With the exception of between twenty and thirty of the chief men, who were sent to prison with the Gurú, the remaining prisoners were made over for execution to Sarbaráh Khán, the city Kotwal or Head of the Police. The work began at the *Chabútrah*, or chief police office, on the 22nd Rabí' I (15th March 1716), and one hundred men were executed every day for a week. All observers, Indian and European, unite in remarking the wonderful patience and resolution with which these men underwent their fate. Their attachment and devotion to their leader were wonderful to behold. They had no fear of death, they called the executioner *Mukt*, or the Deliverer,* they cried out to him joyfully "O *Mukt!* kill me first!" Every day one hundred victims met their fate and artificers were kept in attendance to sharpen the executioners' swords. After the heads had been severed from the bodies, the bodies were thrown into a heap, and at night-fall they were loaded into carts, taken out of the city, and hung up on the trees.†

Although life was promised to those who became Mahomedans, not one prisoner proved false to his faith. Among them was a youth, whose mother made many supplications to Kutb-ul-Mulk, through Ratn Chand, his díwán or principal man of business. She said she was a widow, had but this son, and he had been unjustly seized, being no disciple or follower of the Gurú but only a prisoner in his hands. The wazír interceded and obtained the boy's life. The woman took the order of release to the Kotwál, who brought out the prisoner and told him he was free. The youth said "I know not this woman, what does she want with me? I am a true and loyal follower of the Gurú, for whom I give my life, what is his fate shall be mine also." He then met his death without flinching.‡

At length on the 29th Jamadi II 1128 (19th June 1716) Bandah and his remaining followers were led out to execution. The rich Khatris§ of the city, who were secretly favourable to his tenets, had offered large sums for his release. But all these offers were rejected. The execution was entrusted to Ibráhím-ud-dín Khán, *Mír Atash*, or general of artillery, and Sarbaráh Khán, the Kotwál. The Gurú, dressed as on the day of his entry, was again placed on an elephant and taken through the streets of the old city to the Shrine of Khwájah Kutb-ud-dín, Bakhtiyár, Kákí.‖ and there paraded round the tomb of the Emperor Sháh 'Álam, Bahádur Sháh. After he had been made to dismount and was seated on the ground, his young son was put into his arms and he was told to take the child's life. He refused. Then the executioner killed the child with a long knife,

* *Mukt* is the final deliverance of the soul from the body, and exemption from further transmigration (Shakespeare, "Dictionary," Col. 1938).

† Kámwar Khán, 163, Mirzá Muhammad, 259, Shiú Dás *Manavvar-ul-Kalám*, fo. 10, J. T. Wheeler, *loc. cit.*

‡ Shiú Dás, fo. 10*b*, Kháfí Khán, II, 766, Khushál Chand, *Nawádir-uz-Zamání*, 405*b*.

§ A high caste of Hindus, numerous in the Panjáb, and chiefly traders.

‖ The place is familiarly known to us as the Kutb Minár.

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dragged out its liver, and thrust it into the Gurú's mouth. His own turn came next. First of all his right eye was removed by the point of a butcher's knife, next his left foot was cut off, then his two hands were severed from his body, and finally he was decapitated. His companions were also executed at the same time. His wife was made a Mahomedan and given over to Dakhiní Begam, the emperor's maternal aunt.*

The Mahomedans looked on this ruthless execution as a fitting retaliation for the cruelties the man had inflicted on their fellow-religionists. Kháfí Khán sententiously sums up the matter with the proverb "Who gets not what he has done; who reaps not what he has sown?"† and he quotes the lines

> Forget not the retribution for trangression!
> Wheat springs from wheat, barley from barley.‡

The Sikh Spiritual Succession.

The Sikhs, as a body, deny the spiritual authority of any one who came after Gurú Gobind Singh. But in a modified form he had successors, and as a conclusion to this paper, I will add a few words carrying on the story into the reign of Muhammad Sháh (1719-1748).

Gobind Singh left no surviving natural issue. But at his death in 1708, as already stated, a boy named Ajít Singh was brought forward by the disciples as his adopted son. After receiving an imperial *mansab*, he was raised to the seat of authority as the head of the sect. He finally found his way to Dihli, in charge of Gobind Singh's widow, Mátá, or Mother, Sundari. In Farrukhsiyar's reign, when he grew up to manhood, evil advisers persuaded him to set up entirely on his own account. Mátá Sundari was turned out, and necessarily a schism arose, she claiming for herself a separate spiritual head-ship. Many Sikhs forsook Ajít Singh and followed her. At length in the seventh year of Muhammad Sháh, a false accusation was brought that one of the Wearers of Patches§ had been killed by him. Some two to three thousand Mahomedans raised a disturbance and with much clamour brought their complaint to Kamr-ud-din Khán, I'timád-ud Daulah, the wazír. Fearing a serious riot, the wazír sent some troops, who captured Ajít Singh and he was executed.‖

Jahi Singh, son of Ajít Singh, was at that time very young. His well-wishers, fearing that some harm might come to him, carried him off to Mathurá and in 1173 H. (Aug. 1759—Aug. 1760) when Chatarman wrote,

* Kámwar Khán 165, 166, Mirza Muhammad, 289, Shiú Dás, 11*a*, Anon. Fragment, 24*b*, Kháfi Khán II, 765.

† K. K. II, 766, and *see* T. Roebuck "A Collection of Proverbs" No. 1723: *Kih kard kih na yáft; Kih kisht kih na dariyad.*

‡ II, 766:

> Az makáfát-i-'aml ghafil ma shau,
> Gandum az gandum baroyad, jau az jau.

§ *Khirkahposh* = Religious mendicant or dervish.

‖ Ráe Chatarman, *Chahár Gulshan*, my copy fo. 143*a*, and *Tarikh-i-Mhdi*, year 1137, "Gurú Ajít Singh, son of Gurú Gobind Singh, successor of Nának, killed on Friday the 4th Jamadi I (= 18th January 1725) at Shahjahánábád for rebellion, by the Emperor's order."

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he was still living there. Many believed in and followed him, but some of the sect had betaken themselves to others.

Mátá Sundari, Gobind Singh's widow, when the quarrel with Ajít Singh took place, started on her own account and drew many after her. On her death, her party transferred their allegiance to Sáhib Dei, known as the *Kuwárah Dúlah* or the Virgin Bride. She was the daughter of some hill rajah, who had sent her to Gobind Singh. Before her arrival, he had departed to the other world. But she refused to take any other husband and adopted the life of a religious mendicant. On Mátá Sundari's death, Sáhib Dei succeeded, but after a year she too died. These ladies had continued to live in Dihli. In 1173 (1759-60) the only religious leader of the Sikhs, was Jahi Singh, son of Ajít Singh, who then lived in Mathurá with a good following of from one to two hundred persons.*

* Ráe Chatarman, *loc. cit.*

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